

the heroes profited by trusting them. Yet the sagas are also full of stories of persons who fell into slavery, e.g. Astrid, widow of King Trygve Olafson, who was found by a merchant in the slave market of Esthonia and redeemed.<sup>1</sup> A thrall was despised because he feared death, and when it impended over him hid, whimpered, begged, wept, lamented to leave his swine and good fare, and offered to do the meanest work if he might live. A hero bore torture bravely and met death laughing.<sup>2</sup> When hero children and thrall children were changed at birth, the fraud was discovered by the cowardice of the latter and the courage of the former, when grown.<sup>3</sup> In the heroic age a conqueror could set a princess to work at the *qvern*. In Valhalla the hero set thralls to work for his conquered victim, to give him footbath, light fire, bind dogs, groom horses, and feed swine. Thrall women became concubines. They worked at the *qvern*, and wove. Love could raise them to pets. Thralls were obtained in the lands raided, but even after they became Christians the Scandinavians raided and enslaved each other. The Roman law system, as the church employed it, and especially tithes, were means of reducing the masses to servitude.<sup>4</sup> Beggars could be arrested and taken before the *Thing*, where, if they were not ransomed by their relatives, they were at the mercy of the captor.<sup>5</sup> Magnus Erikson ascended the throne of Sweden, Norway, and Skona in 1333. Two years later he decreed that no one born of Christian parents should thereafter be, or be called, a thrall.<sup>6</sup>

302. The sale of children. In the Germanic states it remained lawful until far down in the Middle Ages for a man to sell his

wife or child into servitude, or into adoption in another family in time of famine or distress. The right fell into disuse.<sup>7</sup>

303. Slavery and the state. The reason why there was little slavery in the Middle Ages is that slavery needs a great state to return fugitives or hold slaves to work. The feudal lord was

<sup>1</sup> *Heimskringla*, II, 77. <sup>2</sup> *Corpus Poet. Bor.*, I, 340. <sup>3</sup> *Ibid*^ 361.

<sup>4</sup> Wachsmuth, *Bauer nkriege*, in Raumer, *Taschenbuch* ^ V.

<sup>5</sup> Gjessing, *Ann.f. Nordiske Oldkyndighed* > 1862, 85 ff.

<sup>6</sup> Geijer, *Svenska Folkets Hist.*, I, 206.

<sup>7</sup> Grimm, *Deutsche Rechtsalterthümer*, 461.